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ABSTRACT

In the interest of providing accountable and responsive service, the Columbus Public Library undertook a survey of business community use of the library's Business and Technology Division. The survey was directed at manufacturing, service, professional, trade, and retail firms in the central Ohio area. A one-page questionnaire was devised to elicit information on the respondent's firm, sources of information, and opinions about the public library. The Chamber of Commerce membership directory formed the mailing list. The results of the survey suggested that two kinds of efforts were necessary to improve the services of the Business and Technology Division. The first was improved publicity, since only a small percentage of the respondents indicated an awareness of familiarity with the public services to business. The second was better services and facilities within the business library itself, in response to the expressed needs and opinions of the respondents. Survey results are presented in narrative and tabular form. (Author/SL)

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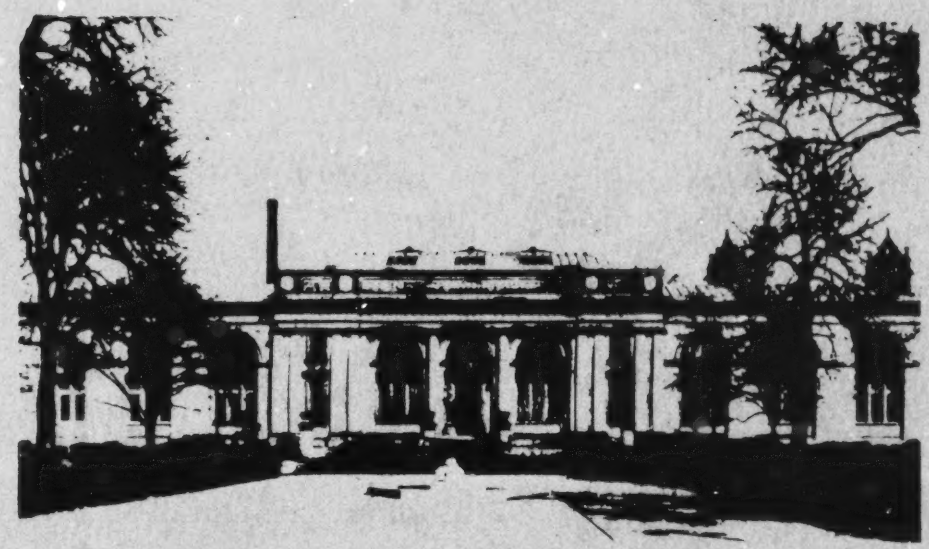
A SURVEY FOR THE COLUMBUS PUBLIC LIBRARY OF BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY INFORMATION NEEDS.



Robert M. Stafford

Clyde S. Scoles

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A REPORT

TO

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

AND

THE LIBRARIAN:

A SURVEY OF THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY

FOR

THE BUSINESS AND TECHNOLOGY DIVISION

COLUMBUS PUBLIC LIBRARY

Robert M. Stafford

Clyde S. Scoles

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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COLUMBUS PUBLIC LIBRARY
96 South Grant Avenue
COLUMBUS, OHIO 43215

June 13, 1974

The Board of Trustees and the Librarian:

We sincerely hope that the Board of Trustees and the Librarian will find this report useful in planning library service to our public. The surveyors are seriously interested in business librarianship and have expended much effort in preparing a report that could result in improvement of our services to the business community.

Providing useful and efficient service to this segment of our community is unquestionably a very important part of library service. While there will always be physical and economic limitations on library service to any group, careful planning and study can maximize our potential contribution to the smooth functioning of daily business activities in Columbus, Ohio. It was of course for that reason that the survey was undertaken.

We appreciate the interest of the Board of Trustees and the Librarian in this project.

Robert M. Stafford
Robert M. Stafford

Clyde S. Scoles
Clyde S. Scoles

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I. THE INTRODUCTION

The public library clearly owes its existence to the public it is designed to serve. It must be accountable to its users on both an individual and a community basis. The accountability of a library is greatly determined by its responsiveness to the wide variety of needs of its users. Among libraries, the public library in particular must continually search for accountability and responsiveness in its operations. While the academic and the special library must each be responsive to the needs of their particular clientele, these libraries are on much firmer ground in justifying their existence. It is certain that all libraries suffer difficulties in fulfilling their responsibilities to those who use them, but the task of "accountability" is much more difficult for the public library because of the undefinable and indefinate nature of its users. The general public is not homogenous in nature nor are its needs easy to access.

The public library does not generally have a sufficient amount of input from those who use its services. The nature and definition of "useful and beneficial" service to the library's public is therefore all the more difficult to find. It is imperative that public librarians find the means and the methods to make their services and libraries worth the taxpayer's expense. A public institution which serves only ten to twenty percent of the population of an area will almost necessarily be of questionable value to some even if it is made clear that the institution usually receives only a miniscule portion of a city or a county's budget. It is therefore necessary for the public library

to perform a desirable service to those who do use it and at the same time to maintain a favorable image to the great number of citizens who might place a positive value on it as an institution, even though they do not use its services themselves.

Quizzing users and potential users as to how they want to use the library and what sort of materials they want the library to maintain for their use is a valid method of acquiring the "user input" that is vital to providing accountable and responsive service. Surveying the opinions and expressed desires of a group of library users is by no means a panacea or "cure all" for the many difficulties of the public library. Librarians realize that materials and services provided by the public library must be selected and offered on the basis of some sort of balance between popular demand and the knowledge of the professional librarian. Yet the importance of the public input, correctly estimated, is of the greatest importance. It is the duty of the library staff to appropriately include the public input into the features of library service.

For reasons of a desire for accountable and responsive service, the Library Director and the Board of Trustees of the Columbus Public Library agreed that a survey of the business community's use of the library's Business and Technology Division was a worthwhile project. The survey would be directed at manufacturing, service, professional, trade, and retail firms in the Central Ohio area (S.M.S.A. 1,000,000+).

Winning the support of business firms (and the individuals connected with them) could well provide the library with life-saving support, especially during times when public library budgets are being rapidly outstripped by rising costs. It is, moreover, in the general interest of any tax supported institution to contribute whatever it can toward improving the general economic prosperity of the area from which it receives that tax support. If the Business and Technology Division at Columbus Public Library can be more useful and beneficial to area businesses, then it is serving both the interests of the constituency it is designed to serve as well as ultimately serving itself.

II. THE PREPARATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

In preparing the survey two main problems presented themselves, one; the preparation of the questionnaire and two; the definition of the survey sample, that is, the preparation of a definite mailing list of firms to be surveyed. These two problems would be solved by examining work done by other public libraries which had conducted the same kind of survey. In searching for a survey model, the 1969 survey conducted in Pomona and Pasadena, California, seemed to be an almost perfect model.[1] That survey was prepared by a professional consulting firm with objectives similar to those of the Columbus Public Library survey. Titled, "The Library and the Economic Community," it was the result of the efforts of the Pomona and Pasadena Public Libraries to better serve the business community in their area.

In preparing the mailing list, the Columbus survey would also follow the Pomona-Pasadena example of surveying members of the local chamber of commerce. Preparing the mailing list (the sample) was a major consideration--an error here would result in a loss of reliable and valid data. It seemed, however, that using the Chamber of Commerce membership directory as the mailing list was the most feasible and also most sensible means of obtaining a valid sample. While members of the Chamber of Commerce do not constitute all potential or actual uers of the library's business services, it still seems that this group is entirely representative of the cross section of business firms in the Central Ohio area and thus could be relied upon to supply the variety of input necessary for a reasonably valid sampling of the opinions and

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[1] Meyer, Robert S. and Rostvold, Dr. Gerhard N., "The Library and the Economic Community, Information Needs of Business and Industry in Pasadena and Pomona, California." 1969.

needs of the local business community. Moreover, in actual numbers, members of the Chamber must constitute a reasonable proportion of the total number of business firms in Central Ohio. The Chamber of Commerce Directory lists some 2,500 members. The Columbus area Chamber of Commerce publishes a directory of membership, but the preparation of the questionnaires for mailing was greatly simplified by the purchase of pre-gummed address labels which the Chamber sold the library ($30.00). The pre-gummed labels with the addresses of member firms were actually the mailing labels for the Chamber of Commerce periodical, one copy of which is mailed to each member. Membership in the Chamber of Commerce may be by both individual or firm, and in many cases is both. Therefore the list contained all members and their firms. In the cases of larger firms, such as Borden and Ohio Bell, multiple memberships for company officers was the rule. Feeling that one response from large companies may not be adequate, approximately half the number of any given multiple membership was used for the mailing of questionnaires. If a large company had ten members, one half of that number received questionnaires. The other names (in this case, the other labels) were discarded. In the case of firms where the chief officer had a membership in his name, and one in his firm's name, the label with the individual's name was used and the other label discarded. In an effort to reduce postage costs for an already expensive mailing operation, it was necessary to reduce the number of members surveyed still further. The great number of auto service stations was cut from the list. While the library certainly does not wish to exclude services to auto service stations, these small operations would probably contribute the least valuable infor-

mation to the library's survey. All memberships by persons or firms in cities outside Central Ohio were also excluded. (There were memberships in Washington, Atlanta, etc.). With the paring of multiple memberships and duplicate firm-owner memberships, and the removal of auto service stations from the list, the final total of mailed questionnaires was 2,240.

The preparation of the questionnaire involved considerably more effort than the acquisition of a mailing list. In the preparation of the questions, it was necessary to keep firmly in mind the goals of the survey. Each proposed question had to be considered in the light of what contribution it would make in the overall survey results. All questions on the questionnaire should supply information necessary to the aims of the survey. The physical limitations of the size of the questionnaire made such decisions even more important. Consideration of the content of the questions was only one part of the problem. The manner of presentation (or the physical form) of the individual question is also of great importance. Questions should not overwhelm the person surveyed, either in content or appearance. The person surveyed must never be frightened or intimidated by the difficulty involved in either understanding the question or in making the response to it. These matters become all the more important when one considers the group to be surveyed. In this particular case, the group surveyed was in no way obligated to answer the questionnaire. The audience was not captive.

It was for these reasons that most questions on the question-

naire were precoded and that open ended or essay questions were kept to a minimum. (The correctness of this move would become evident when returned surveys began to arrive.) It seemed that the questionnaire should not be longer than one page, although both sides of an 8½" x 14" sheet were used. The risk of overwhelming the recipients by two pages or more of questions was too great, even though more information might be obtained from each questionnaire. Moreover, the practical consideration of mailing costs was of great importance. Additional weight would increase mailing costs, resulting in the mailing of fewer questionnaires (due to budget restrictions).

In the formulation of the questions themselves, the Columbus survey was broken down into three broad areas titled "Your Company," "Sources of Information," and "The Public Library: Your Opinions and Needs." Each of these sections was designed to provide the library with information about the firm, about the usual sources of information of the firm and the individual responding to the questionnaire, and the expressed needs, and opinions, of the respondent in regard to the kinds of materials he wanted the library to maintain and how he wished to use them. In addition, at the end of the questionnaire, a section of precoded questions was added with the intention of testing reactions to greater support of the library, specifically the Business and Technology Division, by the local business community. Basically, this last section was a restrained attempt to test the predisposition of respondents to providing the library, or specifically the Business and Technology Division, with supportive funds.

In the section labeled "Your Company," information about the individual firm was the main aim. The questions asked about the type of firm (by type of business), the number of employees, and the firm's gross annual income. Additionally, respondents were asked the length of time their firm had been in Columbus and the job title of the respondent to the questionnaire. In quantifying the survey results, it would be desirable to know what types and sizes of firms prefer what kinds of service, and what kinds of materials. The surveyors also needed to know what types of firms used library service most often, and what types of firms needed more effort to reach.[2] In the last part of this particular section, the respondent was asked if his firm had specific information finding employees. Responses here should indicate to the library the nature of the organized effort, if any exists, on the part of firms to gather needed information.

The next section of the questionnaire was labeled "Sources of Information." In this section the surveyors were primarily interested in information about <u>where</u> the firms got business related information. A great part of this section was concerned specifically with use of the public library. After a precoded question asking about the firm's usual sources of "outside information" such as "Chamber of Commerce" or "university professor," the respondent was asked to answer several questions about his use of the public library; which library did he use for business related matters, which for personal reasons. The respondent

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[2]Columbus, Ohio is not a manufacturing city, but rather one where "white collar" type businesses are concentrated.

was also asked to estimate the number of times he had used the public library in the past year for both business related and personal use. Additionally, the surveyors hoped for more insight here by asking the respondent whether he considered his use of the public library, either for business or personal use, "frequent" or "infrequent," or in the "almost never" or "never" category. Following this "frequency of use" question, the respondent was asked to designate by name the library he most often used for business purposes and the one most often used for personal reasons not connected with his firm. Responses to this question would provide the surveyors with information about which library in the Central Ohio area was most frequently used for business purposes as well as which branches of the Columbus Public Library System were most frequently used for business or personal reasons. If business related collections were ever developed in the branch libraries, those most frequently used by business people, for either personal or business related reasons, should be primary candidates for such collections. The last question in this section asked the respondent to rate his own "awareness" of the public library's services. The surveyors here sought information that would help assess the necessary intensity of a public information campaign about the library's services. If the majority of respondents rated themselves as "unaware" or only "slightly aware" of the library's services, then a public information campaign might be prerequisite to improving the library's relationship to the business community. Hopefully, responses to this section of the questionnaire will help the surveyors identify the information gathering activities of the business community, and help appraise the position of the public library in the overall picture.

The section of the questionnaire labeled "The Public Library: Your Opinions and Needs" was intended to provide the surveyors with the stated opinions and needs of the respondents in regard to materials and services offered by the library (its Business and Technology Division). Respondents were asked to mark precoded questions indicating how they wanted to get their information--by visit, telephone or mail. Additionally they were asked to indicate the desired time limitations for receiving the information. In two questions, the survey asked respondents to indicate subject areas and specific types of materials that they could best make use of in their business. Each of these questions had a space for comments or an "other" space for possible responses not allowed for in the precoded structure of the questions. An essay question opened this section asking the respondents to identify anything that they did not like about using the public library for business purposes. The responses to this question have obvious utility for improving the library's services, both from the standpoint of the library as a whole and the Business and Technology Division in particular.

The last section of the questionnaire was a hodge-podge of questions. The most important part of this section was the first question, a precoded one, carefully designed in an attempt to estimate the respondents feelings about contributing funds or paying for specialized services. While the question, like the whole questionnaire, was aimed at the business community and thus would specifically apply to the Business and Technology Division, it still seemed that the responses here might apply to the whole library system. This section of

the questionnaire also contained a question asking the respondent if he would like a regularly prepared acquisitions list mailed to him. The questionnaire ended with a question allowing for more "free-form" input from respondents. The question asked for respondent's ideas as to how the public library could better serve the local business community. This question should be psychologically valuable because it respectfully solicits opinions. Moreover, it should be valuable for the actual content of the responses. Responses in essay form will indicate to the surveyors a tone which is not discernible in precoded questions.

In preparing the questionnaire, much attention was given to making it psychologically palatable to recipients. The soft lined introduction and the wording and even the physical lay-out of the questions were major considerations. Yet the surveyors were still concerned about the questionnaire being mailed to many people who had no idea of the library's business related services. Some of the recipients would probably be hard pressed to even locate the public library. Yet the responses of these people might be just as valuable as the responses of those who use the library's services on a regular basis. It was for these reasons that an information flyer was prepared and mailed with each questionnaire. The flyer would serve as an "advertisement" for the library and its Business and Technology Division. It would better inform those who were aware of the library's services and acquaint those who were not. The surveyor hoped that the flyer would provide enough information about the Division's services to encourage responses from those who were completely unacquainted with

it. Clarifying the library's business related services would hopefully provide enough background information to elicit responses from those who were not aware that the public library even offered such services. The flyer included kinds of information available from the Business and Technology Division and listed services and periodicals received by the Division. Photographic reduction allowed the inclusion of some 270 titles on one side of the flyer. A self addressed stamped envelope was also mailed with each survey. The surveyors hoped that an already stamped and addressed envelope would carry-over a positive psychological value, thus increasing the number of responses.

III. RESULTS AND EXPLANATIONS OF TABLES

1. Which of these broad categories best describes your company? See Table I-1.

In this question, 305 respondents marked "Service" (38.02%) followed by "Professional" and "Trade" firms with 140 (17.45%) and 104 (14.96%) respondents respectively. Of the 802 firms responding, "Service" and "Professional" combined to total over half of the questionnaire returns, not surprising considering that Columbus is not a center for heavy industry, but rather "white collar" type businesses. 82 "Financial" firms responded (10.22%) and 43 firms were in the "Other" category (5.36%).

2. Number of employees. See Table I-2.

Taken on a total basis, the greatest number of firms ranked in the smallest category, "1-10" employees. 231 firms, or 29% of the total respondents, were in this category. Percentages in the larger categories generally dropped off gradually, with the exception of a jump at the last category, "500+" employees. The high percentage of total firms in this category is accounted for by the high number of manufacturers in the category. 24% of the manufacturers reported 500 or more employees, the only one of the six types of firms to do so. Other types of firms follow the overall trend, most of them being in the smallest category, "1-10" employees. While number of employees is not necessarily an indication of the resources and assets of a firm, it is significant to note that the greatest number of respondents, 231 (29%), were small business firms. Only 71 or 9% of the firms were in the very large category.

3. If information is available, approximately what is your firm's gross annual income? (OPTIONAL) See Table I-3.

This question was marked optional since the surveyors wished to respect the privacy of the respondents, especially that of "non-public" companies such as most professional firms and most small service and manufacturing operations. 224 of the respondents or 28% took the option of not responding here. Of those responding to the question, 243 firms or 30% marked the largest category, "1,000,000+" in gross annual income. This constitutes the largest category. All the other income categories represented considerably fewer respondents. By type of firm, "Manufacturing" showed the greatest percentage in the "1,000,000+" category, that figure being 47%. Both "Financial" and "Trade" categories showed a healthy 37% and 33% respectively in the top income category.

4. Number of years in Columbus, Ohio. See Table I-4.

Responses to this question were tabulated on the basis of one to ten years in Columbus, Ohio, constituting a "new" firm and eleven years and over in Columbus constituting an "old" firm. Significantly, 568 firms, or 71% of the responses, indicated enough years in Columbus to be considered "old" firms. Only 22% of the firms had been in Columbus less than eleven years. 56 firms or 7% did not respond. By types of firms, "Manufacturers" showed the greatest percentage in the "old" category (87%). Percentage-wise, the "Service" category showed the greatest percentage of "new" firms, 29%. The significant information here is that most of the firms are "old" ones which have been in Columbus over ten years.

5. Job title of person responding to this questionnaire. See Table I-5.

This question was designed to provide the surveyors with more insight into responses by tabulating the in-company position of the person marking the questionnaire. The overwhelming number of responses came from presidents, with vice-presidents and managers ranking second and third. The high number of presidents responding to the questionnaires was not surprising, since their names are most likely to appear as members or representatives of their firms in the Chamber of Commerce mailing list which was used for this survey.

6. Does your firm have specific employees, clerical or research, who customarily gather information for the firm? See Table I-6.

This question was intended to help the surveyors determine the organized information gathering activities of the responding firms. The majority of the firms, 449 in number or 56% of the total responses, indicated that they did not have specific information gathering employees. 301 firms, or 38%, said they did have specific employees for this purpose. Distribution by type of firm was fairly even, with only one type showing a stronger tendency toward having information gathering employees than the others. The "Financial" category is the exception here with 54% of this type of firm saying they did have specific information gathering employees.

7. What sort of outside sources does your firm usually consult for information needs? See Table II-1.

The responses to this question show a clear tendency for firms to rely on the Chamber of Commerce or other business people for their information needs. 60% of the firms said they consulted the Chamber of Commerce and 58% said that they consulted other business people. A high percentage indicated government agencies as a source of outside information (49%). The public library as an information source ranked fifth in the sources cited, with 35% of the firms indicating public library use. By type of firm, "Manufacturers" and "Professional" firms cited the public library most (42% each).

8. Approximately how many times has your firm used the public library for business related information in the past year? See Table II-2.

Most of the respondents indicated no use of the public library for business information in the past year (40%). Only 10% of the firms indicated using the library more than ten times in the past year. By types, "Professional" firms marked the highest use category most often, with 17% saying they used the library over ten times in the past year. "Financial" firms also indicate a higher than average use of the public library with 37% saying they consulted the library "2 to 10" times in the past year, a relatively high figure. The "Trade" firms indicated the highest non-use figure, 57%, and said that they had not used the public library in the past year. In this same question, respondents were asked to rate their use of the public library for business purposes.

(See Table II-2a). The majority of the firms rated their use of the public library as "infrequent." A small percentage (9%) said that they used the public library "frequently," with "never" or "almost never" sharing nearly equal percentages (23% and 26% respectively). Table II-2 and II-2a would not necessarily correspond when viewed by a librarian. It would seem that the 40% non-use indicated in Table II-2 would require more "never" responses in Table II-2a. Apparently, the businesses would rate frequency of use of library facilities by standards different from those of the librarian. Again, in this table, "Professionals" and "Manufacturers" show highest frequency of use of the public library.

9. How many times in the past year have you used the public library for personal reasons not connected with your firm? See Table II-3.

In this question, only 18% of the total responses indicated public library use in excess of ten times in the past year. 27% of the respondents said that they had used the public library "2-10 times" in the past year for personal reasons. The same percentage (27%) said that they had not used the library at all in the past year. A comparison with Table II-2 indicating business-connected use of the public library will show that businessmen are more likely to use the library for personal than for business reasons. In Table II-2, a full 40% said that they had not used the public library for business purposes in the past year. In Table II-3, only 27% said that they had not used the library for personal reasons in the past year--much less than the 40% figure indicating non-use for business. Moreover, in comparing

Table II-2a (business realted use) to Table II-3a (personal use) where the respondent was asked to rate his use of the facilities, we can see that the "frequent use" rating for personal use of the library is double the "frequent use" for business related usage. It is also apparent that a greater number of respondents rated their firm-connected use of the public library as "never" compared to their personal use of the library. 23% rated their firm's use of the library as "never" compared to only 14% who rated their personal use as "never." By types of firms, there is a fairly even distribution in most categories. The significant factor here is that business people tend to use the public library more for personal than for business (firm-related) reasons.

10. Which public library do you use most for business purposes? See Table II-4.

In this table all responses were tabulated by name of the library, including out of town and non-public libraries. The significant factor here is that the overwhelming number of responses indicated the Main Columbus Public Library (346 or 43% of the returned questionnaires mention the Main Columbus Public Library). The closest second was 33 for Upper Arlington Public Library. Bexley and Grandview libraries recorded similar numbers, perhaps indicating some geographic importance to business people's use of library services. The well stocked State Library and Ohio State University Libraries were not mentioned frequently, despite their wealth of resources. A few Columbus Public branches were mentioned, including a reasonable number for Morse Road branch, the

largest branch in the Columbus Public Library system. There were 313 "no responses" on this question.

The respondents' indications of the names of libraries they used for personal reasons is shown in Table II-4a. A great number again mentioned the Main Columbus Public Library (205 or 26% of all returned questionnaires). Suburban systems also counted frequently along with two Columbus Public Library branches which serve areas populated by business people. The significant factors here are the relatively heavy use of the Main Columbus Public Library and an indication of relatively frequent use of two Columbus Public branches.

11. How aware of the public library's services would you consider you and your firm? See Table II-5.

In this question, only 11% of the respondents considered their firms and themselves to be "quite aware and familiar" with the library's services. 30% considered themselves "aware." One half of the respondents considered themselves and their firms "unaware" or only "slightly aware." The implications here are obvious. By types of firm, the "Professional" category rates itself as most familiar with the library's services.

12. What are the things you don't like about using the public library for business purposes. No Table.

The consistent answer here was "parking." This is apparently a reaction to the crowded parking conditions at Main Library. Another consistent answer was that the library is "too far away" or "inconvenient." The next most frequent area of complaints was in regard to the collection. Many respondents indicated that the collection was "not up to date" or "not responsive to their particular needs." Almost all complaints about the Business and Technology Division centered around complaints concerned with lack of table space and lack of study carrels. Complaints about library staff were few. When they appeared, complaints about staff usually questioned the staff's comprehension of business and technically related matters. The majority of respondents did not answer this question. On many occasions, respondents praised the library and its staff rather than complained about it. The significant indications in this question were the parking problem and the need for the Business and Technology staff to be aware of the complaints about the collection and available study space in the Division.

13. How would you prefer to use the library's services? See Table III-1.

The responses here indicated a preference for telephone use of the library. (57%). Responses here bear a direct relationship to parking and access problems mentioned above. Yet surprisingly, 43% of the respondents prefered "personal visits." The possibility of quick and accurate mail service attracted only 21% of the respondents.

14. In most cases, how soon after a request would you need the information? See Table III-2.

Responses here indicated an evenly distributed preference for time periods. 28% of the total preferred a "few hours," 26% the "next day" and 29% were willing to wait during the "week of the request." Surprisingly only 14% wanted their information immediately. By types of firm, most followed the overall pattern. "Manufacturers" and "Professionals" appeared to need their information most quickly with totals of 45% and 50% respectively saying they needed their information immediately or "in a few hours." The wide breakdown in this table indicates that current Business and Technology Division practices of answering requests no later than the next day is probably an acceptable policy. The fact that 29% of respondents were willing to wait during the "week of the request" may surprise some.

15. What subject areas would your firm use most in seeking business related information? See Table III-3.

In this question respondents were given a choice between "technological areas," "basic sciences," "management/economics/finance and marketing," and an "other" category (open ended space). The overwhelming number (65%) chose the "management/economics/finance/marketing" area. 25% wanted technological material with a surprisingly small 4% indicating "basic sciences." 13% marked "other" types of materials, many of which appeared as choices in the next part of the questionnaire. By types of firm, every type preferred the "management/economics/finance/

marketing" area with the strongest preference for "technological area" by "Manufacturers" and "Professionals." These responses are quite significant in their indication of the most desired subject areas for purchase of new materials.

16. What types of materials do you want the library to maintain to best serve you and your firm's business needs? See Table III-4.

In this question respondents were given a wide choice of standard reference type materials common to most business oriented collections. Most respondents made multiple choices. The most frequent choices overall were "statistics, economic, population, etc." (40%), "trade journals" (37%) and "management books," (39%). Other frequent preferences included "loose leaf services" (28%) and "buyers guides" and "trade catalogs" (21%). By types of firm, most followed the general trend indicated in the tabulation by total responses. No type of firm indicated needs particularly different from the others. The significant factor here is the preference for statistical materials and books on management type subjects and trade and professional journals.

17. In some communities, local business actively supports the information providing activities of the public library. Do you think that local business might be attracted to any of the following: See Table IV-1.

In this question the surveyors presented the respondents with choices aimed at testing for more active support from the business community, including support of a financial nature. 300 respondents or 37% left this question blank. 138 firms indicated a willingness to "contribute funds to improve and expand services" (17%) and 65 firms indicated a willingness to "contribute funds to subsidize or initiate a specialized collection" (8%). This indicates that 25% of the 802 respondents were not opposed to some form of direct financial support of the library's services. 28% said they would donate "useful materials." 24% said they would pay for "special research" and 25% said they would pay for "information announcements." By types of firm, 31% of the "Financial" firms marked one of the two responses indicating a willingness to make direct monetary contributions to the library. 29% of the "Manufacturers" did so as well as 29% of the "Professional" firms. The significant factors here are that 25% of the total firms surveyed are willing to contribute funds directly to the library and, that by type, "Financial," "Manufacturing," and "Professional" firms are most frequently willing to do so.

18. Would you be interested in receiving a free monthly listing of all new acquisitions of books, periodicals, pamphlets and new services purchased by the Business and Technology Division? See Table IV-2.

In this question only 41% of the total respondents wanted to receive an acquisitions list from the Business and Technology Division. It is interesting to note that the majority of those who indicated a

desire to receive the list did not include an address. They either assumed that the surveyors already had it or they did not really hope or want to receive the list at the immediate moment.

19. Aside from what you may have already indicated above, how do you think that the public library could reach and help the local business community on a broader and more effective basis than it may now be doing? No Table.

Responses to this open-ended essay question were few. The recurrent suggestion was "more publicity" or "inform" the business community of "what the library has." Most responses clearly indicated a need for more publicity of the library's services. Almost no other response was recorded. One interesting suggestion was for the library to conduct classes to teach businessmen the basics of using the library's facilities.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the survey seem to suggest two kinds of efforts necessary to improve the services of the Business and Technology Division. The first area is publicity; the local business community must be better informed of the library's services. The second area is improvement from within the Division as suggested by the expressed needs and opinions of the respondents to the questionnaire. The two areas are closely related on many points, including the possibility that any real improvements in the Division will only result from monetary support generated by a publicity and public relations campaign.

Publicity

The Columbus Public Library should engage in a greater effort to make the business community aware of its services. The survey results indicate that only a small percentage of firms consider themselves to be aware of and familiar with library services. It is also clear that business people use the library more frequently for personal reasons than for business-related ones, perhaps indicating that they do not perceive of the possibilities of library service to industry and commerce. It is significant to note that public library is ranked fifth in the survey of firms' outside information sources. Moreover, respondents to the questionnaire indicated more and better publicity as a means of better reaching the business community. A number of firms and individuals telephoned the Division for additional copies of the information flyer which was mailed with the questionnaire.

It is recommended that such public information activities be aimed at dispelling the image of the public library as an institution that requires self-service in order for its resources to be used. An intensified public information program designed to increase awareness of the Columbus Public Library should maintain a priority or cost-benefit position side by side with book and salary appropriations. The surveyors are aware of the difficult legalities involved, but still feel that a legally acceptable program could be carried on. To better publicize the services of the Division, some of the following might be considered:

1. More cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce, hopefully getting library space in their monthly publication. This agency could also provide the library with a great number of contacts in the business community. The Division should send out more of its professional staff to speak to groups and organizations about business-related services. Information notices might be sent to the Chamber's offices.

2. More effort in getting publicity in the local newspapers. Announcements about services and materials would be in order here. Since the local papers do have commerce and business sections, a well prepared effort should pay-off here.

3. Consideration of the possibility of a mail oriented effort,

with flyers and even possibly the preparation of a several page booklet explaining the nature and structure of the services of the Business and Technology Division. These publications would be mailed directly to the firms.

4. Consideration of library sponsored seminars conducted by competent business librarians for the instruction of business people in the use of the library and the structure of business reference materials.

Improvements in the Business and Technology Division: its collection and physical facilities

The Business and Technology Division should consider the following:

1. The Division should evaluate its collection on the basis of suggestions from respondents to the survey. Respondents overwhelmingly indicated they wanted books in the management/economics/finance/marketing area. Moreover, some responses suggested that materials were not current. Respondents want statistical sources, looseleaf tax and government regulation services, and they want a good collection of trade and professional journals. While the Division is currently disposed toward this type of material, the results of the survey would suggest even stronger impetus in that direction.

2. The Division must structure its service as business people would prefer to use it. Respondents would prefer to use the library by telephone. The Division now has three lines, expanded service may require more. While mail service was mentioned a poor third to personal visits and telephone use, there is some need here. The Division should consider a well organized mail service, possibly one in which photocopies could be mailed to firms at their request. A payment system for this service should be organized so as to make the operation as simple as possible for the firm. In most cases, the Division seems to be providing requested information in an acceptable time period. A great number of firms indicated that they could wait until later the same week for the request. This is longer than the usual one day service now provided by the Division.

3. The Division needs expanded physical facilities. Study carrels should be added and more table space provided. The present seating capacity of the Division is 32. This is not enough. All aspects of creature comfort must be considered in order to make the Division an attractive place in which the businessman may work and study.

4. Improvements in the Division's collection and physical facilities may require more funds than are available. The

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survey has made the library aware that at least 25% of the responding firms are well disposed towards contributing funds for the improvement and expansion of services and for the initiation and maintenance of special collections. The library should consider the best approach to solicit funds from the kinds of companies most likely to contribute. Other large public libraries have obtained such funds. There is no reason for Columbus Public Library to fail in the effort. Along with private sources, Columbus, Ohio, is the location for such charitable organizations as Battelle Memorial Institute. Institutions like Battelle make regular contributions to all sorts of agencies in the public interest. Such possibilities must not be ignored.

5. To provide Columbus businessmen with a style of service they would prize, the Columbus Public Library should consider the establishment of a separate Business and Industry Division perhaps modeled on the image of a company library. The surveyors realize that this is not an easily obtained objective and would require changes in traditional Columbus Public Library policies and procedures. Separate physical facilities would be necessary for such a division and a more business oriented staff is suggested. Services should become more personalized; regulations less "childlike" (as one survey respondent said) and more liberal and flexible.

More time saving conveniences and procedures should be introduced and the boundaries of library service greatly expanded. As business services at Columbus Public Library are currently provided in the same division with many non-business materials, the businessman must often compete with other segments of the community for the librarian's attention. In order to bring about the desired amount of concentrated effort in the area of business-related services, a separate Business and Industry Division is clearly required.

6. As previously indicated, additional funding is required. Besides solicitation of funds from local business groups, the library should consider seeking public funds (federal or state) perhaps supplied initially from the State Library as a part of a demonstration project within the confines of a separate Business and Industry Division.

V. TABLES

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TABLE I - 1

Which of these broad categories best describes your company?

Firms reporting/by type	#	%
Manufacturing	128	15.96%
Service	305	38.02%
Financial	82	10.22%
Trade	104	12.96%
Professional	140	17.45%
Other	43	5.36%
TOTAL	802	99.96%

TABLE I - 2

Number of Employees

Number of Employees	1 - 10		10-25		25-50		50-100		100-250		250-500		500 +		No Response	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Manufacturing	12	9%	16	13%	23	18%	14	11%	22	17%	10	8%	31	24%	0	0%
Service	97	32%	55	18%	55	18%	35	11%	34	11%	9	3%	20	7%	0	0%
Financial	26	31%	10	12%	14	17%	11	13%	8	10%	2	2%	11	13%	0	0%
Trade	27	26%	23	22%	26	25%	11	11%	9	9%	2	2%	6	6%	0	0%
Professional	61	43%	29	21%	20	14%	9	6%	6	4%	8	6%	3	2%	4	3%
Other	8	19%	6	14%	3	7%	4	9%	3	7%	2	5%	0	0%	17	40%
TOTAL	231	29%	139	17%	141	18%	84	10%	82	10%	33	4%	71	9%	21	3%

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TABLE I - 3

If information is available, approximately what is your firm's gross annual income?

Firm's Gross Annual Income	50		50-100		100-250		250-500		500-1,000		1,000 +		No Response	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Manufacturing	2	2%	11	9%	11	9%	8	6%	11	9%	60	47%	25	20%
Service	25	8%	25	8%	35	11%	23	8%	35	11%	89	29%	73	24%
Financial	3	4%	10	12%	5	6%	5	6%	2	2%	30	37%	27	33%
Trade	0	0%	4	4%	16	15%	7	7%	13	12%	34	33%	30	29%
Professional	9	6%	15	11%	17	12%	17	12%	14	10%	22	16%	46	33%
Other	0	0%	4	9%	2	5%	2	5%	4	9%	8	19%	23	53%
TOTAL	39	5%	69	8%	86	11%	62	8%	79	10%	243	30%	224	28%

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TABLE I - 4

Number of years in Columbus, Ohio

Number of years in Columbus, O.	OLD		NEW		NO RESPONSE	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Manufacturing	111	87%	14	11%	3	2%
Service	205	67%	88	29%	12	4%
Financial	57	70%	18	22%	7	8%
Trade	85	82%	16	15%	3	3%
Professional	88	63%	38	27%	14	10%
Other	22	51%	4	9%	17	40%
TOTAL	568	71%	178	22%	56	7%

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TABLE I - 5

Job title of person responding to this questionnaire

	#
President	245
Vice-President	100
Manager	155
Owner/Proprietor	53
Fiscal Officer	50
Secretary	42
Partner	23
Personnel Manager	15
Public Relations	11
Librarian	10
Miscellaneous	58
No Response	40
TOTAL	802

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TABLE I - 6

Does your firm have specific employees, clerical or research, who customarily gather information for the firm?

Clerical or Research Employee	YES		NO		NO RESPONSE	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Manufacturing	48	38%	72	56%	8	6%
Service	106	35%	189	62%	10	3%
Financial	44	54%	33	40%	5	6%
Trade	29	28%	65	62%	10	10%
Professional	58	41%	71	51%	11	8%
Other	17	40%	20	46%	6	14%
TOTAL	301	38%	449	56%	52	6%

TABLE II - 1

What sort of outside source does your firm usually consult for information needs?

Outside Sources of Information	Chamber		Gov't. Agency		Univ. Prof.		Univ. Library		Public Library		Other Bus. People		Other Sources		No Response	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Manufacturing	100	78%	73	57%	36	28%	28	22%	54	42%	93	73%	51	40%	5	4%
Service	195	64%	142	47%	52	17%	36	12%	110	36%	177	58%	94	31%	12	4%
Financial	49	60%	47	57%	17	21%	9	11%	27	33%	51	62%	31	38%	4	5%
Trade	55	53%	39	38%	12	12%	3	3%	19	18%	63	61%	37	36%	3	3%
Professional	66	47%	79	57%	27	19%	41	29%	59	42%	62	44%	54	39%	5	4%
Other	20	51%	13	33%	7	18%	7	18%	13	33%	23	59%	13	33%	6	15%
TOTAL	485	60%	393	49%	151	19%	124	15%	282	35%	469	58%	316	39%	35	4%

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TABLE II - 2

Approximately how many times has your firm used the public library for business related information in the past year?

Times used by firm	NONE		ONCE OR TWICE		2-10 TIMES		+ 10		NO RESPONSE	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Manufacturing	47	37%	41	32%	22	17%	12	9%	6	5%
Service	139	46%	68	22%	57	19%	29	9%	12	4%
Financial	20	24%	23	28%	30	37%	7	9%	2	2%
Trade	59	57%	21	20%	17	16%	2	2%	5	5%
Professional	43	31%	25	18%	45	32%	24	17%	3	2%
Other	15	35%	9	21%	10	23%	5	12%	4	9%
TOTAL	323	40%	186	23%	181	23%	79	10%	33	4%

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TABLE II - 2a

Therefore, would you say that your company uses the public library frequently, infrequently, almost never or never.

Firm's Frequency of Library Use	Freq.		In-Freq.		Almost Never		Never		No Response	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Manufacturing	17	13%	54	42%	29	23%	20	16%	8	6%
Service	29	9%	101	33%	78	26%	79	26%	18	6%
Financial	7	9%	33	40%	26	32%	12	15%	4	5%
Trade	4	4%	24	23%	31	30%	42	40%	3	3%
Professional	14	10%	66	47%	33	24%	23	16%	4	3%
Other	3	7%	9	21%	10	23%	7	16%	14	33%
TOTAL	74	9%	287	36%	207	26%	183	23%	51	6%

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TABLE II - 3

How many times in the past year have you used the public library for personal reasons not connected with your firm?

Library Use for Personal Reasons	NONE		ONCE OR TWICE		2-10		10 +		No Response	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Manufacturing	30	23%	23	18%	39	30%	23	18%	13	10%
Service	90	30%	65	21%	76	25%	60	20%	14	5%
Financial	22	27%	16	20%	18	22%	16	20%	10	12%
Trade	33	32%	22	21%	27	26%	16	15%	6	6%
Professional	33	24%	26	19%	44	31%	25	18%	12	8%
Other	8	19%	8	19%	9	21%	6	14%	12	28%
TOTAL	216	27%	160	20%	213	27%	146	18%	67	8%

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TABLE II - 3a

Therefore, would you say that you use the public library frequently, infrequently, almost never or never?

Firm's Frequency for Personal Use	Freq.		In-Freq.		Almost Never		Never		No Response	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Manufacturing	30	23%	57	45%	17	13%	17	13%	7	5%
Service	65	21%	111	36%	68	22%	42	14%	19	6%
Financial	15	18%	30	37%	16	20%	15	18%	6	7%
Trade	18	17%	36	35%	23	22%	20	19%	7	7%
Professional	19	14%	54	39%	29	21%	17	12%	21	15%
Other	7	16%	13	30%	7	16%	3	7%	13	30%
TOTAL	154	19%	301	38%	160	20%	114	14%	73	9%

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TABLE II - 4

What public library do you use most for business purposes?

LIBRARY	# of Use
Columbus Public Library	346
Beechwold	9
Clintonville	4
Driving Park	0
Dublin	0
Franklinton	0
Gahanna	3
Hilliard	1
Hilltonia	0
Hilltop	3
Linden	2
Livingston	1
Martin Luther King	0
Morse Road	13
Northern Lights	0
Parsons	0
Reynoldsburg	1
Shepard	0
South High	1
Whitehall	1
*Branches (Undesignated)	0
Worthington Public Library	18
Bexley Public Library	28
Grandview Public Library	30
Grove City Public Library	3
Upper Arlington Public Library	33
Westerville Public Library	4
*Cleveland Public Library	4
*New York Public Library	1
*Delaware Public Library	1
*Lancaster Public Library	1
State Library of Ohio	13
Supreme Court Library	5
Ohio State University Libraries	10
Capital University Library	0
Franklin University Library	1
No Response	313
TOTAL	850

*Library outside Franklin County

Respondents often mentioned more than one library even though the question asked for only one. All names of libraries were recorded, thus the total in the above table is greater than 802, the total number of returned questionnaires.

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TABLE II - 4a

Which public library do you use most for personal reasons not connected with your firm?

LIBRARY	# of Use
Columbus Public Library (MAIN)	205
Beechwold	38
Clintonville	4
Driving Park	0
Dublin	8
Franklinton	0
Gahanna	13
Hilliard	5
Hilltonia	14
Hilltop	6
Linden	1
Livingston	0
Martin Luther King	10
Morse Road	31
Northern Lights	0
Parsons	0
Reynoldsburg	13
Shepard	3
South High	2
Whitehall	16
Branches (Undesignated)	7
Wothington Public Library	45
Bexley Public Library	63
Grandview Public Library	56
Grove City Public Library	7
Upper Arlington Public Library	93
Westerville Public Library	15
*Cleveland Public Library	0
*New York Public Library	0
*Delaware Public Library	2
*Lancaster Public Library	0
*Circleville Public Library	1
State Library of Ohio	1
Supreme Court Library	0
Ohio State University Libraries	3
Capital University Library	0
Franklin University Library	0
No Response	272
TOTAL	934

*Library outside Franklin County

Respondents often mentioned more than one library even though the question asked for only one. All names of libraries were recorded, thus the total in the above table is greater than 802, the total number of returned questionnaires.

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TABLE II - 5

How aware of the public library's services would you consider you and your firm?

	Quite Aware		Aware		Slightly Aware		Unaware		No Response	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Manufacturing	15	12%	42	33%	44	34%	25	20%	2	2%
Service	36	12%	79	26%	109	36%	65	21%	16	5%
Financial	6	7%	33	40%	28	34%	10	12%	5	6%
Trade	4	4%	22	21%	46	44%	24	23%	8	7%
Professional	21	15%	54	39%	31	22%	17	12%	17	12%
Other	3	7%	8	19%	14	33%	4	9%	14	33%
TOTAL	85	11%	238	30%	272	34%	145	18%	62	7%

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TABLE III - 1

How would you prefer to use the library's services?

	Personal Visits		Phone		Mail		No Response	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Manufacturing	72	57%	75	59%	31	24%	23	18%
Service	115	38%	182	60%	64	21%	41	13%
Financial	39	48%	47	57%	17	21%	6	7%
Trade	36	35%	59	57%	24	23%	10	10%
Professional	77	55%	71	55%	23	16%	16	11%
Other	9	21%	21	49%	12	28%	3	7%
TOTAL	348	43%	455	57%	171	21%	99	12%

TABLE III - 2

In most cases, how soon after a request would you need the information?

	Few Hours		Next Day		Week of Request		Immed.		No Response	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Manufacturing	35	27%	35	27%	42	33%	23	18%	23	22%
Service	82	27%	84	28%	83	27%	37	12%	51	17%
Financial	28	34%	24	29%	25	30%	13	4%	7	2%
Trade	28	27%	27	26%	43	41%	9	9%	12	12%
Professional	48	34%	33	24%	28	20%	23	16%	19	14%
Other	4	9%	9	21%	13	30%	5	12%	5	12%
TOTAL	225	28%	212	26%	234	29%	110	14%	122	15%

TABLE III - 3

What subject areas would your firm use most in seeking business related information?

	Tech.		Science		Manag./ Econ.		Other		No Response	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Manufacturing	62	48%	9	7%	82	64%	10	8%	25	20%
Service	60	20%	9	3%	207	68%	34	11%	56	18%
Financial	3	4%	0	0%	65	79%	15	18%	4	5%
Trade	22	21%	3	3%	68	65%	22	21%	31	30%
Professional	43	31%	7	5%	74	53%	14	1%	15	11%
Other	8	19%	4	9%	22	51%	6	14%	6	14%
TOTAL	198	25%	32	4%	518	65%	101	13%	137	17%

TABLE III - 4

What types of materials do you want the library to maintain to best serve you and your firm's business needs?

	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8		9		10		11		12		No Response	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Manufacturing	44	34%	55	43%	53	41%	57	45%	46	36%	35	28%	20	16%	27	21%	35	27%	15	12%	19	15%	3	2%	25	20%
Service	36	12%	128	42%	108	35%	117	38%	60	20%	87	29%	25	8%	22	7%	54	18%	3.01	%	34	11%	14	5%	63	21%
Financial	1	1%	31	38%	26	32%	43	51%	10	12%	29	35%	12	15%	10	12%	22	27%	2	2%	10	12%	7	9%	12	15%
Trade	11	11%	41	39%	39	37%	39	37%	30	29%	32	31%	10	10%	11	11%	16	15%	1.01	%	14	13%	2.02	%	16	15%
Professional	30	21%	44	31%	59	42%	50	36%	16	11%	34	24%	17	12%	25	18%	33	24%	8	6%	19	14%	5	4%	22	16%
Other	5	12%	12	9%	11	8%	16	37%	8	6%	10	23%	4	9%	3	7%	7	16%	1	2%	4	9%	0	0%	5	12%
TOTAL	127	16%	311	39%	296	37%	322	40%	170	21%	228	28%	88	11%	98	12%	167	21%	20	4%	100	12%	31	4%	143	18%

1. books on sciences and technology
2. books on management type subjects
3. trade and professional journals
4. statistics (economics, population etc.)
5. buyers guides and trade catalogs
6. looseleaf services on such subjects as taxes and government, regulations in business and industry)
7. handbooks and tables
8. standards and specifications
9. government publications
10. patents
11. audio-visual items
12. other

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TABLE IV - 1

In some communities, local business actively supports the information provicing activities of the public library. Do you think that local business might be attracted to any of the following?

1. contribute funds to improve and expand services
2. help select materials
3. pay for special research
4. donate useful materials
5. pay a small fee for information announcements
6. contribute funds to subsidize or initiate a specialized collection and maintain it
7. other

	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		No Response	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Manufacturing	30	23%	21	16%	42	33%	40	31%	41	32%	8	6%	0	0%	53	41%
Service	50	16%	59	19%	61	20%	78	25%	76	25%	21	7%	0	0%	118	39%
Financial	18	22%	14	17%	25	30%	25	30%	23	28%	7	9%	0	0%	27	33%
Trade	13	13%	16	15%	26	25%	31	30%	26	25%	9	9%	0	0%	40	38%
Professional	21	15%	26	19%	30	21%	41	29%	32	23%	19	14%	0	0%	49	35%
Other	6	14%	6	14%	9	21%	7	16%	5	12%	1	2%	0	0%	13	30%
TOTAL	138	17%	142	18%	193	24%	222	28%	203	25%	65	8%	0	0%	300	37%

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TABLE IV - 2

Would you be interested in receiving a free monthly listing of all new acquisitions of books, periodicals, pamphlets and new services purchased by the Business and Technology Division?

	YES		NO		No Response	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Manufacturing	43	34%	55	43%	30	23%
Service	144	47%	118	39%	43	14%
Financial	38	46%	31	38%	13	16%
Trade	37	36%	44	42%	23	22%
Professional	56	40%	51	36%	33	24%
Other	11	26%	14	33%	18	42%
TOTAL	329	41%	313	39%	160	20%

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